280.8/P.1841
2538
3A-55782
Vault
1842?
c. 2

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A LATTER-DAY SAINT AND AN ENQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

(Reprinted from the Star of January 1.)

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SOLEMN WARNING TO THE METHODISTS.

By one who was formerly a Preacher among them.

☞ Published by P. P. PRATT, 47, Oxford Street, Manchester, where all Publications of the Latter-day Saints may be obtained.

DIALOGUE.

Enquirer: Sir, I understand you are a member of the Church called *Latter-Day Saints.* Why is the Church called by that name?

Saint: The term Saint is as old as Adam, and has been in use in all ages and dispensations as a sacred name applied to the people of God by inspiration, but more especially applied by the sacred writers to the people of God in the last days. Enoch, speaking of the latter day glory, says, "The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints. Daniel, in speaking of the latter day glory often, uses the term "saints." The Psalms speak of the people of God in the latter day, saying, "Gather my *saints* together unto me;" and John the Revelator, in speaking of the latter day events, says, "Here is the patience and faith of the *saints.*" For all these and many other reasons we consider that the people of God should be distinguished by no other name but that of *Saints,* the term *Latter-Day* being appended as merely expressive of the age or dispensation in which we live.

Enquirer: But there are millions who profess to be the people of God who are called various names, such as Catholics, Methodists, Episcopalians, Protestants, and many others. Is it wrong for the children of God to be distinguished by these several names?

Saint: It doubtless is very erroneous, for as much as they are nowhere known in Scripture, except in a prediction of John, where he describes Babylon as full of names of blasphemy.

Enquirer: What! are these names blasphemy?

Saint: It would seem they are, as they are a great insult to Christ, and a mockery of godliness. Would it not be an insult or mockery for a wife to refuse to take the name of her husband, and to take the names of several other men? Or rather, for several women who were not called by his name to profess to be his wives?

Enquirer: It certainly would. But what are the principles of the Latter-day Saints? for certainly the name alone cannot constitute them saints.

Saint: No; the name alone can never make them saints. In order to be a saint, a person must keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and also take the name.

Enquirer: Do the saints consider it essential to salvation to keep the commandments of God?

Saint: Certainly. "He that heareth these sayings of mine," says Christ, "and doeth them is like a man who built his house upon a rock," &c. Again, Christ has said, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

2538

and again, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that shall do the will of my father which is in heaven."

Enquirer: What must we do to come into his fold, and to keep his commandments?

Saint: We must believe in Jesus Christ, repent of our sins, and be baptized in his name, and then he has promised to forgive our sins, and grant us his holy spirit, by the aid of which we shall be enabled to understand and do our further duties.

Enquirer: What is it to believe in Jesus Christ?

Saint: It is to believe his word and promises, and the testimony of his servants.

Enquirer: What is it to repent?

Saint: It is to turn from our sins and humbly confess, and forsake them, and also to make restitution to those whom we have wronged.

Enquirer: What is it to be baptized in his name?

Saint: It is to be buried in the water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and rise again out of the water, and this to be administered to us by one sent of God, and having authority to administer in holy things.

Enquirer.—How do we prove that baptism is a burial?

Saint.—Christ has said we must be born again of water and the Spirit, in order to our admission into the kingdom of God. Now, our first birth was a change of element. We came forth from being immersed in water into the world, and began to breathe the air for the first time. This was our natural birth, and no one can be born again of water short of being again immersed in it and coming forth from it, as in the natural birth. Nothing short of an actual immersion and again coming forth into a change of element can possibly be considered a birth by any one who knows any thing of nature, or of language. Again, Paul calls baptism a burial in his writings to the Romans. He tells them they were "buried with him in baptism."

Enquirer.—Admitting baptism to be a burial, still, would not infant baptism answer every purpose?

Saint.—No; because faith and repentance are necessary before baptism, without which the ordinance is of no manner of use, and not only so, but Christ has commissioned his servants to preach to them, to teach them, and then baptize them; and has promised that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. Now if this commission is to be applied to infants, they will all be damned, both baptized and unbaptized, for all that this commission applies to must be damned except they believe, and this will apply to baptized ones and unbaptized ones. Now, no one will hold that all infants are damned; therefore no one will consistently apply this commission or any part of it to infants.

Enquirer.—You seem to make this matter very plain, were it not for one thing, and that is this: The reflection arises that millions of people have had no other baptism but infant sprinkling, and it is painful to think that they are all in error, and that those who have died will not enter the kingdom of God. What then will become of them?

Saint.—Those who have not had the gospel in its purity and fulness in this world must have it preached to them after they are dead, that they may be judged according to men in the flesh, and live according to God in the spirit. This objection might be made with equal propriety by the hundreds of millions of Pagans, for there have many millions more died in the faith of Paganism than those who have died in the faith of perverted Christianity in all its various forms. Now these Pagans were quite as precious in the sight of God as those who have lived and died in error under the perverted forms of the Christian religion. Now the same answer will apply to both. They must have the gospel in the life to come or they cannot enjoy the presence of God in the celestial glory. (See Peter's epistles).

Enquirer.—But how came all Christendom to be so long in error on these subjects?

Saint.—The Roman Catholic Church (the whore of all the earth) handed down this error of infant baptism for many ages, and the Protestants never reformed it, therefore it still exists.

Enquirer.—But could not ministers who are sent of God in the different sects have detected this error, seeing they are sent to minister salvation, and salvation depends on the gospel in its fulness and purity.

Saint.—The fact that they continued in this error proves to a demonstration that God did not send them, for when he sends them he reveals to them his truth, and they know the truth, and are made free by it, and are sent to bear witness of the truth. "He that followeth me shall not walk in *darkness*, but shall have the *light of life*." But if more proof was wanting that they are not sent of God, we may have it from their own doctrine, for their doctrine is that God has given no revelation for many hundred years. Now if this be the case, how could he send them? He can only send men by revelation. And the Roman CatholicChurch being once corrupted, could not hand down a true priesthood any more than a thistle can produce a fig.

Enquirer.—It appears, then, that the whole Church has been in the wilderness of apostacy and corruption for many centuries. But pray, sir, tell me how did the Latter-Day Saints first originate. or from what source did they first obtain their priesthood and ordinances? Have they come down in purity from the days of the apostles, and been hid up in some detached or secluded part of the earth, where, unknown and undisturbed, they were enabled to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus unmixed and uncontaminated by the dark mists of Popery which overspread the rest of the world? Have they now burst forth from this retirement, as the champions of truth, to arouse the world from its long slumber, and to usher in the latter day glory?

Saint.—Some of those who held the holy priesthood in ancient times, the priesthood which is after the power of an endless life, without beginning of days or end of years—some of those, I say, being raised from the dead, and others translated, still hold the apostleship and priesthood; and it has pleased God to send them as holy angels to earth to reintroduce the pure gospel, and to commission and ordain the first instruments of the Latter-day Saints; and through this means the Church has been raised up, the ordinances and gifts restored, and thus the latter day glory has dawned upon the world, to prepare the way for the restoration of Israel, and the second coming of the Messiah.

Enquirer.—This is indeed glorious news, if it be really true; but what are the evidences on which these important matters rest?

Saint.—The ministering of angels, the visions and the revelations made to the founders of the Church of Latter-Day Saints, are well established by the testimony of many witnesses, the greater part of whom are yet alive, but some are fallen asleep. These all testified that they had heard, and seen, and handled of the things which are now revealed; and, moreover, the Holy Spirit attends the ministering of the Saints, and confirms the word with signs and wonders, and gifts and mighty blessings, by the enjoyment of which the saints who hearken to the testimony of these witnesses are enabled to come to the knowledge of the truth, and to add their testimony to those of the first witnesses; and thus a great and marvellous work is rolling forth among the children of men; and thus many things which were revealed and published some ten or twelve years since are now being fulfilled in the eyes of every candid observer who has paid any attention to these things.

Enquirer.—But is it not possible that these thousands of saints who testify to visions, angels, revelations, and gifts, are all deceived by imagination or by some vain and delusive spirit?

Saint.—The same question might be asked with equal propriety in regard to all the angels, visions, and revelations which were enjoyed by the ancients, and recorded in the Bible, as these

modern manifestations are quite as well authenticated as the ancient, and a modern man is no more liable to be deceived or to deceive others than were the ancients. But if there be need of caution in this matter when so well authenticated, then how much need have we to be cautious how we embrace those systems which do not even profess to be revealed from heaven, and which offer no testimony whatever of their being true; for instance, the Church of England, Methodists, and other modern sects, can neither bring Scripture, nor angels, visions, revelations, or any thing else to prove that God has instituted their churches or systems of worship; on the contrary, they declare that God has revealed nothing to any man for more than a thousand years past, and that the Scripture order of things is done away for ever, and their senseless forms without power instituted in its stead.

ENQUIRER: Really, sir, I must say that the great truths you have set before me are reasonable and evident; and I am inclined to embrace the truth, and to cast my lot among the saints. But is there no preparation on my part which will make me more fit to repent and be baptized? Or must not God first do something to make me worthy?

SAINT: No; God has done all on his part, and has sent you the gospel of reconciliation; and the first thing he requires of you is to repent and be baptized in his name for remission of sins, and then he has promised to remit your sins and give you the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now, if you believe him, come now, and take him at his word, for if yon tarry till you are better, you will never come at all.

I must now close this conversation by forewarning you that the day of the Lord is at hand, and not many years hence the Son of God will be revealed from heaven; and then all the wicked will be destroyed from the earth, and the saints of the Most High will possess the whole earth, and reign for ever and ever.—AMEN.

INTERESTING LETTER FROM CHELTENHAM,

Written by one who was formerly a Methodist Preacher, and a zealous opposer of the Saints.

Cheltenham, Dec. 30th, 1841.

Dear Brother,

If you think that these few lines are worth a place in your valuable columns, please to insert them, as a warning to the Methodists of England not to oppose the work of the Lord in these the last days.

I was a local preacher among the Methodists nearly a year and a half, during which time I preached the gospel as far as I knew, sometimes walking 30 miles to preach twice on a Sunday. When I heard of the Latter-Day Saints, I tried to persuade myself that they were the false prophets spoken of, who were to come. I then began to oppose them with all my might, and, like St. Paul, I thought I was doing God's service. I went so far as to oppose brother Curtis while preaching in the open air, and excited the people so against him that they would not hear him. But I shall not be satisfied until I have preached the gospel in that very place. But however in the month of June last I went to hear for myself, and wrote the sermon in short hand, and went home and examined it by the word of God, and I found that what I had been preaching was only tradition, and not the gospel; but what I heard the Latter-Day Saints preach was the gospel. On the 16th of June I embraced the gospel, and I bless the Lord that I ever embraced it.

And now I bear my humble testimony to the truth of the work, and I testify to the world that I have heard the gift of tongues, and interpretations given; I have seen the sick healed by the laying on of hands; I have seen the wretched made happy, the foolish made wise, and the blind see out of obscurity. And now I say to the Methodists of England, beware how you oppose the work of the Lord, for you may depend upon it you will repent of it. I am sorry I ever opposed it, and I am determined by the help of God to lift up my voice as a trumpet, and call on all beneath the sound of my voice to come and obey the gospel.—Hoping the Methodists will take a warning by what I have said,

I remain your brother in the
New and Everlasting Covenant,
THOMAS SMITH.